



Things Fall Apart Elements of Storytelling

Every story told contains at least these five **story elements**:

Setting: where and when the story takes place. When determining a story's setting, be sure to consider the social conditions and mood or atmosphere of the story as well.

Characters: the main players in the story. When considering characters, ask yourself: Who is the **protagonist** (the main character the story is mostly about)? Who is the **antagonist** (the character in conflict with the protagonist)? Consider all aspects of the character to get a full picture of who this person is, including his or her appearance and beliefs and how others view him or her.

Conflict: the "meat" of the story. The conflict is what drives the plot, or the main events, of the story. When reflecting on the conflict, it is helpful to ask: What is the main conflict the protagonist faces? How is the conflict resolved, if at all?

Point of View: the position from which a story is told. To figure out the point of view, ask: Who is telling the story? Is there more than one point of view? What sort of limitations might the narrator have in his or her point of view? Is the narrator reliable?

Theme: the central idea or message of the story. When determining a theme, ask yourself: What central idea or message ties all the other elements together?

Every story told in Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, including the characters' and narrator's accounts of events in the story, contains these five elements.

Choose a story from *Things Fall Apart* and use the graphic organizer to map the five story elements that make up the story.

Suggested stories:

Chapter 7: the story of the quarrel between the earth and sky

Chapter 10: the narrator's account of the *egwugwu* ceremony

Chapter 11: Ekwefi's story of the tortoise

Chapter 16: the missionaries' stories of God and the villagers' misunderstanding

RL.9-10.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

RL.9-10.2 Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

Setting:	Characters:
Conflict:	Point of View:

Theme:

Answer Key

Sample Student Response

Here is a sample student response based on Ekwefi's story of the tortoise in chapter 11.

